

Professor Nigel Sparrow  
Senior National GP Advisor and Responsible Officer  
Care Quality Commission  
City Gate  
Gallowgate  
Newcastle Upon Tyne  
NE1 4PA



3<sup>rd</sup> February 2016

Dear Professor Sparrow,

**Re: Care Quality Commission (CQC) Fee Increase**

I have been asked by Devon, Cornwall, Somerset, Avon and Gloucestershire LMCs, on behalf of GPs in the South-West of England, to express our unhappiness with the decision taken by CQC last month to increase fees to GP surgeries by an average 700%. No amount of special pleading can possibly justify such an increase, especially in an environment of austerity when all aspects of public life are otherwise subject to severe financial restraint.

The consequences of this decision are further exacerbated when we consider that this astronomical increase is to be levied against the resources going into general practice and therefore can only possibly be released by diverting them away from front line patient care. It is truly anathema for the Commission responsible for the Quality of Care forcibly to divert these resources away from patients and into administration.

Practices are also extremely angry that the so-called consultation process you announced did not ask whether such an increase in fees was desirable or proportionate, but instead only enquired as to how quickly the fee hike should be introduced. Consultation solely over the timetable followed rather than the decision itself is not consultation at all, but merely a fig leaf designed to spare CQC from the accusations of putting red tape ahead of patient care.

South-West LMCs are under no illusion that you have any intention of reversing your decision, but I would welcome a written acknowledgement from you that this move will inevitably erode patient care to fund your organisation. I would also inform you that on the heels of the "Intelligent Monitoring" debacle, and derogatory comments made about the profession by Prof. Field, this decision has brought the national CQC leadership into further disrepute in the opinion of most GPs in the South-West.

Yours sincerely,

**Dr. MB Sanford-Wood**  
**Medical Secretary, Devon LMC**  
**On behalf of the South West Region**

Cc// South West Region LMCs

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